

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1                   1.     A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in  
2 bulk, the method comprising:  
3                   receiving a first electronic and a second electronic submission;  
4                   extracting a first portion from the first electronic submission and a second  
5 portion from the second electronic submission;  
6                   determining a first code for the first portion and a second code for the  
7 second portion, wherein the first code is indicative of the first portion and the second code  
8 is indicative of the second portion;  
9                   comparing the first code to the second code; and  
10                  filtering the second electronic submission in response to comparing the  
11 first code to the second code.

1                   2.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the filtering of the second electronic submission  
3 comprises storing the second electronic submission in a bulk mail folder.

1                   3.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first portion is extracted from visible text in the  
3 first electronic submission.

1                   4.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, the method further comprising:  
3                   modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first code with the  
4 second code;  
5                   determining if the count reaches a threshold;  
6                   comparing a third code associated with a third message; and  
7                   filtering the third message if the third code matches the second code.

1                   5.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first portion is related the first code by one of a  
3 hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check (CRC).

1                   6.       The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2   in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein each of the first and second codes is represented in less  
3   bits than a corresponding portion.

1           7.       The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2   in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are chosen  
3   from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an instant  
4   message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board posting, and  
5   a classified advertisement.

1                   8.       A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in  
2   bulk, the method comprising:

3 receiving a first electronic submission;  
4 extracting a first portion from the first electronic submission;  
5 determining at least a first code for the first portion, wherein the first code  
6 is indicative of the first portion;

7 receiving a second electronic submission;  
8 extracting a second portion from the second electronic submission;  
9 determining at least a second code for the second portion, wherein the  
10 second code is indicative of the second portion;  
11 comparing the first code with the second code;  
12 modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first code with the  
13 second code;

14 determining if the count reaches a threshold; and  
15 filtering subsequent electronic submissions similar to the first electronic  
16 submission in response to determining if the count reaches the threshold.

1                   9.       The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2       in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the filtering subsequent electronic submissions  
3       comprises storing the subsequent electronic submissions in a bulk mail folder.

1                    10.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2    in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first and second codes are each a number  
3    represented in a same number of bits.

1                    11.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first portion is related the first code by one of a  
3 hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check (CRC).

1                    12.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein each of the first and second codes is represented in less  
3 bits than a corresponding portion.

1                    13.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are chosen  
3 from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an instant  
4 message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board posting, and  
5 a classified advertisement.

1                    14.    A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in  
2 bulk, the method comprising:  
3                    receiving a first electronic submission;  
4                    extracting a first plurality of portions from the first electronic submission;  
5                    determining a first plurality of codes for the first plurality of portions,  
6 wherein each of the first plurality of codes is indicative of its respective portion;  
7                    receiving a second electronic submission;  
8                    extracting a second plurality of portions from the second electronic  
9 submission;  
10                    determining a second plurality of codes for the second plurality of  
11 portions, wherein each of the second plurality of codes is indicative of its respective  
12 portion;  
13                    comparing the first plurality of codes with the second plurality of codes;  
14                    modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first plurality of  
15 codes with the second plurality of codes;  
16                    determining if the count reaches a threshold; and  
17                    filtering similar electronic submissions in response to determining if the  
18 count reaches the threshold.

1                   15.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the filtering similar electronic submissions comprises  
3     storing the similar electronic submissions in a bulk mail folder.

1                    16.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the comparing the first plurality of codes with a  
3     second plurality of codes comprises determining if a percentage of the first plurality of  
4     codes exactly matches one of the second plurality of codes.

1                    17.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein each of the first plurality of portions is respectively  
3     related to its code by one of a hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check  
4     (CRC).

1           18.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are  
3     chosen from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an  
4     instant message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board  
5     posting, and a classified advertisement.

1                   19.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the codes are each a number represented in a same  
3     number of bits.

1                   20.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2    in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein each codes is represented in less bits than a  
3    corresponding portion.